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Message Text

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15
ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 MMS-03 PM-07 SS-20 SPC-03 ABF-01 INR-10

PER-05 EB-11 DRC-01 RSC-01 /077 W
---------- 039487
R 190435Z DEC 73
FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9817
INFO SECDEF WASHDC
DSA
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI
CINCUSARPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: MILI, SN
SUBJECT: OPRED: PROPOSED EXPANSION OF SURPLUS PROPERTY
DISPOSAL FACILITY IN SINGAPORE

REF: A. STATE 244609; B. SINGAPORE 4830 (NOTAL)

1. I HAVE SERIOUS RESERVATIONS ABOUT ANY EXPANSION
OF SURPLUS PROPERTY DISPOSAL FACILITY IN SINGAPORE
AT THIS TIME. AS INDICATED REF B, GOS IS CURRENTLY
FEARFUL OF IMPLICATIONS OF CONTINUING OIL CRISIS,
AND HAS ADOPTED MODERATELY PRO-ARAB STANCE IN ORDER
REAMIN IN ARABS' GOOD GRACES AND AVOID BEING BLACK-
LISTED. RECENT ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF THIS POLICY IN-
CLUDE GOS SUPPORT FOR RATHER STRONGLY WORDED PRO-ARAB
ASEAN STATEMENT CONDEMNING CONTINUED ISRAELI OCCU-
PATION OF ARAB TERRITORY AND ISSUANCE INSTRUCTIONS
TO LOCAL OIL FIRMS TO CEASE SUPPLYING FUEL TO US
SEVENTH FLEET AND US MILITARY AIRCRAFT. WHILE PRIME
MINISTER LEE IS CURRENTLY WELL DISPOSED TOWARD US,
WE BELIEVE IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES HE WOULD HAVE
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SERIOUS MISGIVINGS ABOUT ESTABLISHING NEW OR GREATLY

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ENLARGED US MILITARY FACILITY IN SINGAPORE
AT THIS PARTICULAR TIME. CONSEQUENTLY THIS IS HARDLY
TIME TO SUGGEST AN INCREASED US PRESENCE FROM CURRENT
LEVEL OF 97 PERSONNEL TO A TOTAL OF 127 INVOLVING AN
INCREASE OF MILITARY AND DOD CIVILIANS FROM 51 TO 81
PERSONS WHICH WOULD BE 64 PERCENT OF USG PERSONNEL
ASSIGNED TO SINGAPORE. IT WOULD BE FAR WISER AND MORE
APPROPRIATE DURING THIS PERIOD TO KEEP OUR PROFILE AS
LOW AS POSSIBLE AND AVOID RAISING ANY QUESTIONS CON-
CERNING TOTALITY OF US PRESENCE.

2. PARA 6 REFTEL STATES DSA REPORTS DEFENSE MINISTER
GOH, DURING CONVERSATION WITH DSA REPS LAST AUGUST,
EXPRESSED GREAT INTEREST IN HAVING CURRENT FACILITY
EXPANDED IF POSSIBLE. ACCORDING DAO, COL. BROOKS, COM-
MANDER PROPERTY DISPOSAL OFFICE HAWAII, VISITED
SINGAPORE LAST AUGUST AND MET WITH ONG KAH KOK, DIRECTOR
OF LOGISTICS IN MINDEF, BUT DID NOT RPT NOT SEE GOH.
AT THAT TIME ONG DID EXPRESS A FAVORABLE ATTITUDE
TOWARD EXPANSION OF DISPOSAL FACILITY. HOWEVER, AS
DIRECTOR OF LOGISTICS, ONG FINDS THIS FACILITY USEFUL
AND HIS PAROCHIAL VIEWS DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT
VIEWS OF PM, FOREIGN MINISTRY OR EVEN CONSIDERED JUDG-
MENT OF DEFENSE MINISTER GOH. THIS IS PARTICULARLY
RELEVANT SINCE I WOULD NOT THINK IT WISE TO MAKE SUCH
MAJOR EXPANSION IN US PRESENCE IN SINGAPORE WITHOUT
TAKING MATTER UP WITH PM PERSONALLY.

3. ANOTHERINACCURACY IN REFTEL IS STATEMENT THAT
NINE PERSONNEL ARE CURRENTLY ASSIGNED TO DISPOSAL
FACILITY IN SINGAPORE. AT PRESENT TIME THERE ARE ONLY
3 PERSONS ASSIGNED TO THE FACILITY. THIS NUMBER IS
OCCASIONALLY AUGMENTED BY ADDITION OF SIX TDYERS, WHO
COME OVER FROM SAIGON FOR PARTICULAR SALES. THUS,
PROPOSED EXPANSION WOULD ACTUALLY BE ADDITIONAL
THIRTY PERSONNEL RATHER THAN TWENTY-FOUR. DSA SHOULD
ALSO BE ADVISED THAT GOS WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY REFUSE
TO ALLOW INTRODUCTION OF ANY VIETNAMESE TO FILL LOCAL
HIRE POSITIONS.

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4. DEPARTMENT AND OTHER ADDRESSEES SHOULD BE AWARE
THAT THIS IS FIRST TIME MISSION HAS BEEN ADVISED THAT
SUCH MAJOR EXPANSION OF SURPLUS PROPERTY DISPOSAL
FACILITY WAS UNDER SERIOUS CONTEMPLATION. DURING COL.
BROOKS' VISIT LAST AUGUST HE ADVISED DATT THAT POSSIBLE
INCREASE OF 5 AMERICAN CIVILIANS WAS UNDER REVIEW.
IN OCTOBER WHEN DATT VISITED HONOLULU COL. BROOKS
SUGGESTED THAT IT MIGHT POSSIBLE BE AS HIGH AS ADDI-

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TIONAL 17. IN EACH CASE DATT REQUESTED THIS EMBASSY BE
KEPT ADVISED OF DSA SPECIFIC PLANS, THE PRECISE NATURE
AND SCOPE OF PROGRAM ENVISAGED AS WELL AS TOTAL NUMBERS
UNDER CONSIDERATION AND SPECIFIC DUTIES THEY WOULD PERFORM.
UNFORTUNATELY, PRIOR TO RECEIPT OF REF A, WE
RECEIVED NO COMMUNICATIONS FROM DSA AS TO DEVELOPMENT
OF THEIR THINKING ON THIS SUBJECT.

5. ASIDE FROM REITERATING MY STRONG OBJECTIONS TO ANY
INCREASE AT THIS TIME BASED ON POLITICAL CONSIDER*TIONS,
I CANNOT PROVIDE ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OR ASSESSMENT
OF THE IMPACT OF THIS PROPOSED INCREASE ON EMBASSY WORK-
LOAD WITHOUT HAVING MORE PRECISE INFORMATION ON PROPOSAL.
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